

# Utah Valley Notes 50th Anniversary of Steel Industry's Advent Here

(continued from 8C)

—Completion of the Geneva Nitrogen Plant, which turns out a variety of nitrogen-rich chemicals, such as ammonium nitrate, nitric acid and anhydrous ammonia, for western agriculture and minerals refining.

—Addition of a new Sheet Mill to produce flat sheets for a number of manufacturing end uses.

—Construction of Atlantic City Ore Mine in Southwestern Wyoming to open pit mine and beneficiate iron ore for Geneva's blast furnaces.

## Important Assets

These and other advances were to prove important assets in the competitive show-down that lay ahead.

Meanwhile, Utah steelmen today tend to view the years from 1946-60 as a period of natural growth and secure markets the likes of which will never come again.

It was a time to get ready for the confrontation that followed, but few were really prepared for the suddenness with which this challenge came.

It all began shortly after 1960, when the first few tons of foreign steel were unloaded at West Coast ports, hardly a straw in the wind.

## Foreign Invasion

After that, Utah steelmakers faced a widening invasion of foreign steel, mainly from Japan, produced by mills on deep water more modern than their own, shipped by cheap water transportation and unloaded squarely on top of the markets they must serve, centered at Los Angeles, San Francisco and Portland-Seattle.

Starting from scratch in 1960, foreign producers by the end of 1972 had captured about 38 percent of the total steel market in the 13 western states. This loss by conservative estimates erased in a dozen years a growth potential for the Utah steel industry roughly equal to more than 3,000 job opportunities.

With such competition came a challenge to the long-range survival of the mill, named Geneva, located in a pasture at a disadvantage in distance by rail to market ranging from 700 to 1,000 miles.

## New Chapter

With it also came a vital new chapter of the Utah steel story entitled: "People Make the Difference."

This opened as early as 1961, when a new Geneva general superintendent, George A. Jedenoff, who now serves as vice president of Western Operations for U.S. Steel, foresaw what was coming and moved to rally Utah County steelmakers to fight back on the ground of common economic interest. He called on Geneva employees to overcome a challenge "as serious as any ever faced by the pioneers of this state."

That was the start of a people-oriented campaign that goes forward, still today, to uphold the future of Utah's first industry by in ovation and superior tea performance in competing for customers. In the beginning, the endeavor was known as "Operation Bootstraps — Geneva."

## Economic Fact

The competitive response by local steelmakers, then and

That night, some 4,000 Geneva employees in a standing demonstration of united purpose pledged individually to achieve a future goal important to all. Their common goal was this:

"To insure for ourselves, our families and our fellow citizens a dynamic, growing steel industry in Utah in decades ahead by making steel that places first in cost, quality and service with our customers in the West and wherever else they may be."

## Picked Up Gauntlet

They picked up the gauntlet that foreign steelmakers had thrown down.

Meanwhile, the philosophy represented by this statement of common purpose may be summed up in three words — shared competitive responsibility.

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In keeping with this, the Utah steelmaking team in February, 1969, observed the 25th anniversary of the date that Geneva's first open hearth was tapped by launching a drive to gain a second quarter century of progress for their industry in Utah.

Governor Calvin Rampton, with an assist from a top open hearth crew, tapped the first furnace in the second quarter century drive.

Earlier this year, Geneva General Superintendent Raymond W. Sundquist, named in 1967 to head up the Geneva steelmaking team, reported that local steelmakers in recent years have achieved significant competitive progress.

By so doing, he said, Geneva employees have won important investments by U.S. Steel during this period to modernize their tools and facilities of production and expand their plant's product line.

## Recent Additions

Such recent additions include:

Completion of a new mill to roll wide flange beams for construction of multi-storied structures, such as apartment buildings, towers and bridges, that require high strength-to-weight ratios.

Installation of oxygen facilities at Geneva's open hearth furnaces.

Addition of new facilities for heat-treating carbon and high-strength steel plates, a process known as normalizing, for an expanding market in the west.

Improvements at the Geneva Pipemill.

Modernization of Geneva's 132-inch plate and strip rolling mills, now underway, to keep pace with physical quality demands by an increasingly competitive market.

## Future Looks Good

Looking ahead, Mr. Sundquist said:

"The future of Geneva looks generally better today than it has at any time in the past dozen years.

"Given the continued commitment of employees, hourly and management, the understanding and help of others in the state who depend on us, we fully intend to decide our own destiny and fulfill this optimistic outlook."

At the same time, he made



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(Photo courtesy of Merrill Christopherson)



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